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ABSTRACT

This 1999 annual report, summarizing the accomplishments of the ERIC system in 1998, begins with a section that highlights progress towards meeting goals, as well as selected statistics. The second section, comprising the bulk of the report, provides an overview of ERIC, including the ERIC database, user services, publications and products, ERIC on the Internet, special projects, outreach and training, and partnerships. Results of four ERIC customer surveys conducted in 1998 are summarized in the third section; these surveys include an exploratory study on meeting parents' information needs, a study of ERIC database searches on the Internet, an AskERIC user survey, and a National Clearinghouse for the ESL (English as a Second Language) Literacy Education user survey. The next section provides an ERIC system directory, and highlights of the ERIC budget are listed in the fifth section. The final section looks at what is ahead for ERIC in the 21st Century. The ERIC mission, audience, and goals are highlighted on the back of the cover. (AEF)

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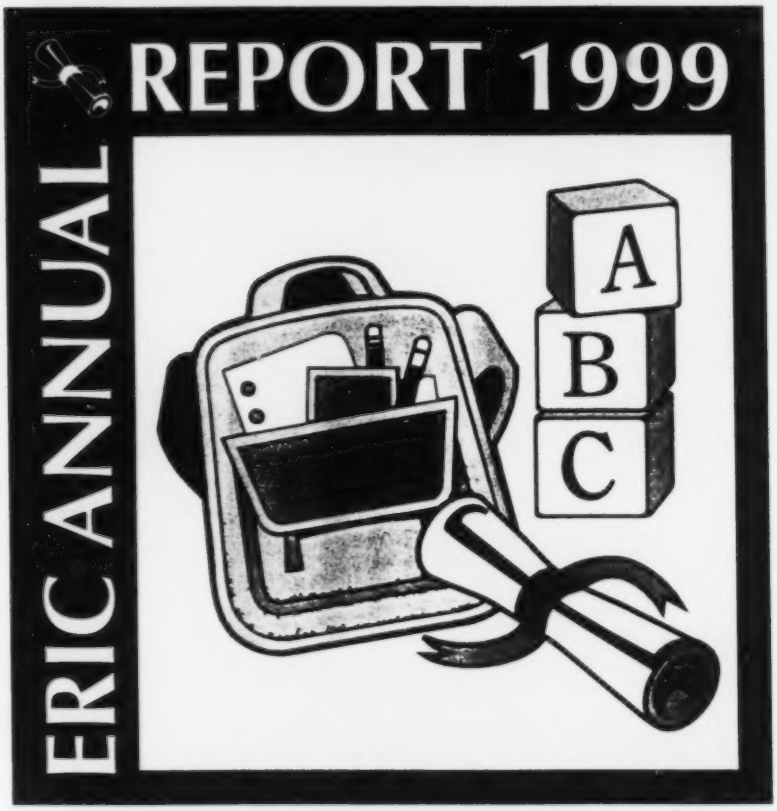
Summarizing the Recent Accomplishments of



the Educational Resources Information Center

ERIC

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Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
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ERIC MISSION, AUDIENCE, GOALS

Mission

The mission of the ERIC system is to improve American education by increasing and facilitating the use of educational research and information to improve practice in learning, teaching, educational decision making, and research, wherever and whenever these activities take place.

Audience

The ERIC audience includes teachers, professors, and librarians; school and college administrators, counselors, instructional media staff, and support personnel; educational researchers; educational policymakers at every level; students and nonformal learners at every age and level, including adult learners; parents; health and social services personnel and caregivers who support families, parents, students, and children; and the media and business communities as they relate to education.

Goals for ERIC by the year 2000:

- Easy, affordable access to ERIC bibliographic and full-text resources from every school, library, household, and point of educational decision making;
- Expansion of ERIC's database and services to make useful information available to all categories of users;
- Expansion of the ERIC information-synthesizing function to include more and a greater variety of publications and to utilize a greater variety of dissemination methods;
- Delivery of documents in a variety of full-text electronic formats, as well as in microfiche and paper forms; and
- Further development of ERIC access on the Internet and in other formats, including the development of virtual libraries and World Wide Web sites.

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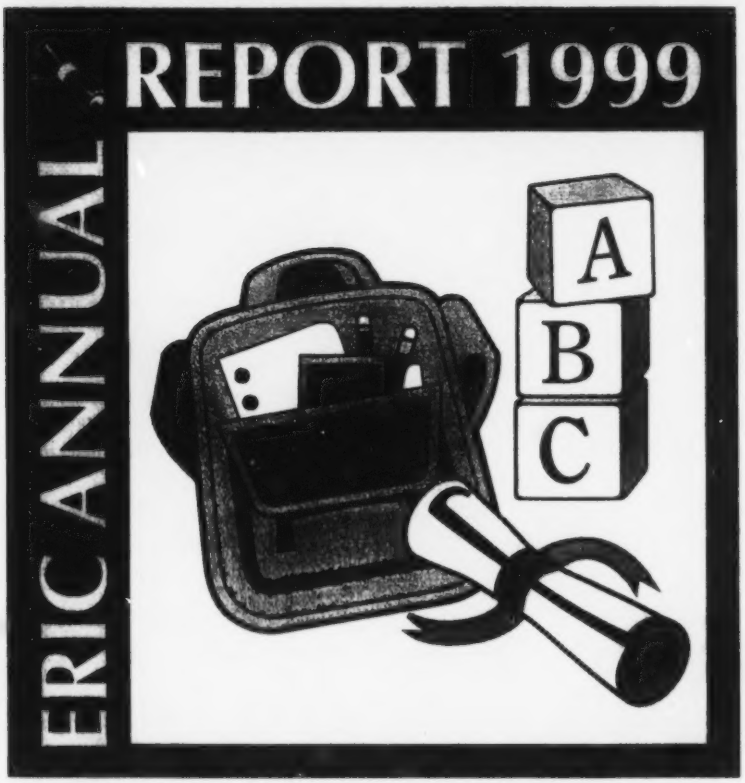
Summer 1999

Summarizing the Recent Accomplishments of



the Educational Resources Information Center

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Foreword

Nearly 35 years ago, ERIC was founded within the Office of Education (a forerunner of today's U.S. Department of Education) to provide departmental staff and researchers with centralized access to federally funded education research. As ERIC approaches the 21st century, that mandate has broadened considerably. ERIC now encompasses a greatly expanded body of education resources, a multiplicity of formats and delivery mechanisms, and a rich diversity of audiences. As part of the Department's National Library of Education (NLE), ERIC supports the NLE mission to serve as a centralized source for information about education and to link libraries, schools, and educational centers across the United States into a network of national education resources.

The past year has marked a period of reassessment for ERIC, a time of internal discussion and external consultation as it considers the challenges of becoming a premier 21st-century information provider. In 1999, a new five-year contract cycle began for the 16 ERIC Clearinghouses, and these contracts now include performance-based measures and requirements for user surveys. Next year, a new contract cycle will begin for the ERIC Processing and Reference Facility—the technical hub of the ERIC database—with the requirements that technology be used innovatively to support faster processing of documents and that the Facility offer state-of-the-art access to the database. The ERIC Facility will also be expected to convene a national board for direction setting and guidance.

As outlined in *Rising Expectations: A Framework for ERIC's Future in the National Library of Education*, ERIC is one of the key "load-bearing walls" of NLE. As such, ERIC is critically involved in Department initiatives and outreach efforts. The ERIC database provides the bibliographic basis and archives for ED Pubs, the Department's centralized publications distribution center.

Over the years, ERIC has become much more than a print-based bibliographic database. The Internet has revolutionized access to education information, and ERIC has embraced this medium. Capabilities not imagined five years ago are now commonplace, and user expectations have risen accordingly. ERIC users with online access now expect that the full body of education literature be made available to them as soon as it is produced, in full text, and at little or no charge. ERIC is working mightily to make such expectations a reality and has made rapid progress in providing content-rich Web sites, virtual libraries, full-text access to many resources, and "smart" search engines to support productive database searching.

Over the past year, ERIC personnel have pooled their visions for the future of ERIC in meetings and reports and have surveyed users as well. Customer feedback and survey results have driven changes, large and small, in clearinghouse operations and have set the stage for a systemwide evaluation of ERIC, expected to be undertaken by an independent source in the year 2000. Results of this evaluation will help guide ERIC's work in the next century.

Keith Stubbs
Director of ERIC

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1998–99 ERIC Highlights

As we close in on the year 2000, we in the ERIC system are pleased to report on our progress toward meeting the ambitious goals we set for ourselves five years ago. These goals are:

- **Easy, affordable access to ERIC bibliographic and full-text resources from every school, library, household, and point of educational decision making**
  - ✧ Anyone can reach ERIC through a toll-free phone call or via the Internet and will receive free, high-quality information from subject experts.
  - ✧ The ERIC Document Reproduction Service's new E*Subscribe service gives library patrons access to electronic copies of ERIC documents through their library's subscription.
  - ✧ Users who want unlimited access to the ERIC database can search it on the Internet or get a very affordable CD-ROM from the ERIC Processing and Reference Facility.
  - ✧ Free subscriptions to *The ERIC Review* are available, and nearly 1,000 new subscribers signed up in the past year.
- **Expansion of ERIC's database and services to make useful information available to all categories of users**
  - ✧ ERIC has successfully broadened its audience to include teachers and students. In 1998, fully 25 percent of the people who contacted ERIC Clearinghouses were elementary and secondary faculty and students; another 25 percent were postsecondary faculty and students.
  - ✧ ERIC welcomed two new Adjunct Clearinghouses, which will extend its database coverage and dissemination of materials in the targeted subject areas of school counseling and postsecondary education.
  - ✧ To support the diverse audiences they serve, ERIC Clearinghouses maintain more than 80 electronic discussion groups serving more than 37,000 education policymakers, administrators, teachers, parents, and library/media specialists.
  - ✧ Users interested in the construction, renovation, and maintenance of schools can now find more information on these topics in the ERIC database and on the Web through ERIC's Affiliate Clearinghouse, the National Clearinghouse for Educational Facilities.
- **Expansion of the ERIC information-synthesizing function to include more and a greater variety of publications and to utilize a greater variety of dissemination methods**
  - ✧ Clearinghouses have expanded their print and electronic publication formats to include newsletters, journal columns and articles, trends and issues alerts, frequently asked questions, and practice application briefs.
  - ✧ The ERIC Clearinghouse on Elementary and Early Childhood Education has recently introduced a refereed electronic journal.

- ✧ The Gateway to Educational Materials special project now offers teachers more than 6,000 lesson plans and other materials for classroom use from 90 organizations.
- ✧ ERIC's 650 partner institutions and organizations provide links to ERIC from their Web sites and disseminate ERIC products to their constituents and members.

■ **Delivery of documents in a variety of full-text electronic formats, as well as in microfiche and paper forms**

- ✧ Customers can now get electronic full-text copies of approximately 80 percent of the ERIC documents from 1993 to the present; three ERIC database search engines offer access to electronic copies.
- ✧ Two clearinghouses are putting full-text copies of their publications on CD-ROMs.
- ✧ To meet the needs of users with limited access to technology, ERIC continues to provide free access to ERIC documents on microfiche at more than 1,000 institutions in 26 countries.
- ✧ In addition to the 1,000 subscribers, EDRS also filled individual orders for 35,877 copies of documents in 1998.

■ **Further development of ERIC access on the Internet and in other formats, including the development of virtual libraries and World Wide Web sites**

- ✧ All ERIC Clearinghouses maintain Web sites with content-rich, full-text resources in their subject areas. Many also offer virtual libraries—full-text collections of online resources from sources within and outside of ERIC—grouped around subtopics within their scope areas.
- ✧ Users who visit the ERIC systemwide Web site can now search a topic across all ERIC Web sites in one easy step, and more than 600 other Web sites provide links to the main ERIC site.
- ✧ To help users navigate the Web, the ERIC Clearinghouse on Higher Education and several other clearinghouses redesigned and expanded their Web sites to provide tutorials that help lead users to valuable resources beyond ERIC.

ERIC by the Numbers

- In 1998, 11,239 documents and 17,465 journal articles were added to the ERIC database, for a total of 980,474 records. ERIC users will find that the database provides coverage of approximately 980 education-related journals in addition to documents produced by more than 2,100 leading education organizations.
- ERIC now has acquisition arrangements with 2,190 universities, research centers, professional organizations, and federal and state agencies.
- The ERIC database is made available through several Internet search engines; five commercial online vendors; five CD-ROM vendors; many locally mounted systems, such as online public access catalogs at universities; and the print indexes *Resources in Education (RIE)* and *Current Index to Journals in Education (CIJE)*. More than 1,000 institutions in 26 countries provide onsite access to the ERIC database and the microfiche collection of full-text ERIC documents.
- The National Parent Information Network was visited 651,016 times in 1998.

- The ERIC Clearinghouses produced more than 660 information products in 1998, including newsletters, journal columns, journal articles, ERIC Digests, books, bibliographies, and other formats.
- ERIC components engaged in collaborative outreach, training, publication, and user service efforts with 650 partner organizations.
- ERIC components hosted more than 80 listservs with a total of more than 37,000 subscribers.
- In 1998, ERIC staff members responded to 180,978 user requests (19,000 more user requests than in 1997), including:
  - ✧ 50,729 toll-free calls
  - ✧ 89,036 e-mail requests (including 44,460 received through AskERIC, the ERIC system's question-answering service)
  - ✧ 34,733 letters
  - ✧ 6,480 visitors
- ERIC personnel went on the road to meet current and potential users by participating in more than 470 education-related meetings, conferences, and workshops; giving more than 230 presentations; and staffing exhibits at more than 80 major conferences.

I think very highly of the ERIC Digests and use them frequently. . . . Bing Nursery School has a home page with a link to the ERIC site so that all our teachers can quickly search your database and pull up information. Some of our teachers also log on to the Reggio and Project Approach listservs.

—Jane Farish, Bing Nursery School, Stanford University

I could not do my job without ERIC—literally! I manage an information resource service here at the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory and use ERIC extensively . . . probably every day. It is truly a wonderful tool. Regardless of the request I get, I know I will likely find an answer in ERIC.

—Jennifer Fager, Resource Specialist, Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory

I use ERIC to help teachers learn to use technology in ways that allow them to be powerful. I travel the USA, and work in the places where technology may be there, but it has never been taught to the teachers. There would be no way that I would be able to do this without the ERIC system. I like the organization of information and the power it gives to the least technologically literate teacher.

—Bonnie Bracey

I use ERIC to keep better informed about research and practices at other community colleges around the country. When I write for publication or prepare documents for public policy review, ERIC is invaluable.

—A junior college president

A Brief Overview of ERIC

The Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) system encompasses the world's largest and most frequently used education database as well as a network of 16 subject-specific clearinghouses, 13 Adjunct Clearinghouses, 1 Affiliate Clearinghouse, and 3 supporting service components. ERIC is sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Educational Research and Improvement, and is administered by the National Library of Education. ERIC has been an important component of the national education dissemination system for more than 30 years, ensuring that education information reaches those who need it, including teachers, administrators, parents, and students.

The ERIC Database

Size. The ERIC database is the world's largest education database. Created in 1966 to capture and make available the "fugitive" education research, the database now includes nearly 1 million records. The ERIC database consists of two files: *Resources in Education* (*RIE*) and *Current Index to Journals in Education* (*CIJE*). *RIE* covers materials other than journal articles. In 1998, the most prevalent document types added to the ERIC database were conference papers, research/technical reports, project descriptions, non-classroom guides, books, evaluation/feasibility reports, and classroom materials for teachers. *CIJE* covers articles from approximately 980 education-related journals. Overall, the ERIC database through 1998 contained 414,563 document records and 565,911 journal article records—a total of 980,474 bibliographic records. Each year, ERIC adds approximately 30,000 records to the database.

Content. ERIC now has acquisition arrangements with 2,190 organizations that submit documents for the database. In addition to these standing acquisitions arrangements, ERIC aggressively solicits education-related material from new sources and accepts unsolicited documents for review. All documents submitted to ERIC are evaluated by subject experts for their education-relatedness, quality of content, legibility, and reproducibility. Inclusion of submitted documents in the ERIC database is not automatic.

Access. The database is available in print, online (Internet, commercial services, and locally mounted systems), and on CD-ROM. There are now five online and five CD-ROM vendors that offer access to the ERIC database, including the ERIC Processing and Reference Facility, which offers a CD-ROM subscription for only $100 per year. A number of organizations purchase the ERIC database, including many universities that offer the database on their online public access catalogs. In addition, many of these organizations grant public access to the database on their systems via the Internet. More than 1,000 institutions in 26 countries around the world provide access to the microfiche collection of full-text ERIC documents; electronic document delivery is also available for many of the more recent documents. The ERIC Document Reproduction Service filled individual orders for 35,877 copies of ERIC documents in 1998.

User Services

ERIC is committed to providing easy access to resources to anyone who is interested in education. ERIC staff receive and answer requests via toll-free phone calls, fax, mail, e-mail, and in-person visits to clearinghouses and ERIC exhibits at conferences. The chart below shows user request statistics for 1998.

How Users Contacted ERIC Components in 1998

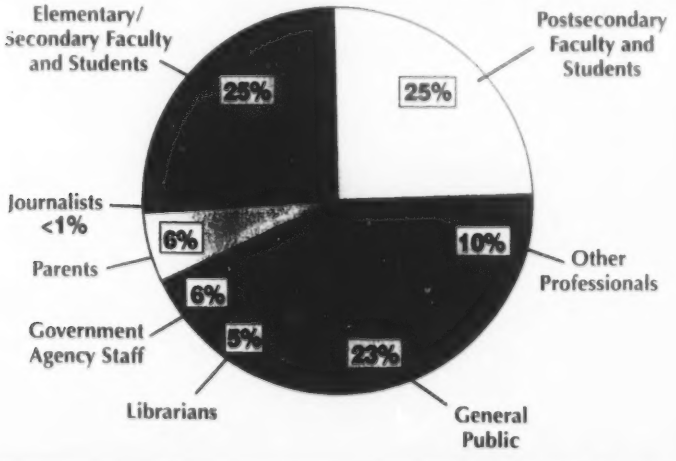
Method	Number	Percent
E-mail*	89,036	49%
Phone	50,729	28%
Letters	34,733	19%
Visits	6,480	4%
TOTAL	180,978	100%

*Note: The E-mail category includes AskERIC e-mail requests.

The ERIC system responds to user requests by providing answers to queries; sending out materials such as ERIC Digests, newsletters, and bibliographies; searching the ERIC database or the reference and referral databases produced by ACCESS ERIC for relevant information; and providing referrals to other education-related organizations.

ERIC Clearinghouses keep records on the types of users who contact them for information. The chart below shows the percentages of several types of users; however, it is important to note that these statistics are based primarily on people who call, write, or visit. It is difficult to capture demographic data on the thousands of users who send e-mail requests, visit ERIC exhibits at conferences, search the ERIC database, or obtain ERIC information via the Internet, so many of these users are categorized as "General Public." (See also pages 20–25 for information on who uses ERIC that was obtained from customer surveys.)

Types of Users Who Contacted ERIC Clearinghouses in 1998



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Publications and Products

The ERIC Clearinghouses analyze and synthesize literature in their areas of expertise and create research reviews, bibliographies, state-of-the-art studies, interpretive studies of high-interest topics, digests, and other publications that meet the information needs of the wide spectrum of ERIC users. In 1998, the clearinghouses produced approximately 660 information products. These products are noteworthy for the collaborative ways in which they are produced, the extensive networks through which they are distributed, and the attention they receive from the field. Many publications result from partnerships between ERIC Clearinghouses and professional associations, private publishers, academic institutions, and other organizations. The clearinghouses' bestsellers for 1998 are listed below.

The ERIC support components produce systemwide resources, including *The ERIC Review*, a free journal that reports critical trends and issues in education and new ERIC developments; a series of Parent Brochures; directories of education-related conferences and information centers; and products that help people use ERIC.

The ERIC Clearinghouses' 1998 Bestsellers

Adult, Career, and Vocational Education
Designing Vocational and Technical Teacher Education for the 21st Century: Implications from the Reform Literature

Assessment and Evaluation
Understanding Achievement Tests: A Guide for School Administrators

Clinical Schools
Resources on Professional Development Schools: An Annotated Bibliography and Resource Guide

Community Colleges
Academic Advising: Organizing and Delivering Services for Student Success

Counseling and Student Services
School Counseling: New Perspectives & Practices

Disabilities and Gifted Education
Life-Centered Career Education (LCCE): Activity Books, 1 and 2

Educational Management
School Leadership: Handbook for Excellence, Third Edition

Elementary and Early Childhood Education
Reflections on the Reggio Emilia Approach

ESL Literacy Education
Making Meaning, Making Change: Participatory Curriculum Development for Adult ESL Literacy

Higher Education
Faculty Workload Studies

Information & Technology
Helping with Homework: A Parent's Guide to Information Problem-Solving

Languages and Linguistics
Profiles in Two-Way Immersion Education

Reading, English, and Communication
101 Ways To Help Your Child Learn To Read and Write

Rural Education and Small Schools
Place Value: An Educator's Guide to Good Literature on Rural Lifeways, Environments, and Purposes of Education

Science, Mathematics, and Environmental Education
Elementary Teachers Do Science: Guidelines for Teacher Preparation Programs

Social Studies/Social Science Education
Constitutional Rights of Juveniles and Students: Lessons on 16 Supreme Court Cases

Teaching and Teacher Education
What Matters Most: Putting the National Commission Report Into Action

Urban Education
School Violence: Risk, Preventive Intervention, And Policy

U.S.–Japan Studies
Teaching About Japan: Lessons and Resources

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ERIC and the U.S. Department of Education's Priorities

In his 1997 State of the Union address, President Clinton made it clear that his number one priority for the next four years is to ensure that Americans have the best education in the world. He issued a 10-point call to action for American education in the 21st century to enlist parents, teachers, students, business leaders, and local and state officials in this effort. Secretary of Education Richard Riley and senior Department officials developed seven priorities for the Department based on the President's call to action. These seven priorities are for all students in the United States.

ERIC produces many publications that address America's education priorities. Following is a list of the priorities and a sampling of recent titles for each priority.

1. **All students will read independently and well by the end of the third grade.**

   Beginning Reading
   —ERIC Clearinghouse on Disabilities and Gifted Education

   Tutoring Children in Reading and Writing, Book One: Kindergarten and *Tutoring Children in Reading and Writing, Book Two: Grades 1 & 2*
   —ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading, English, and Communication

2. **All students will master challenging mathematics, including the foundations of algebra and geometry, by the end of the eighth grade.**

   Helping Your Child Learn Algebra
   —ERIC Clearinghouse for Science, Mathematics, and Environmental Education

   Research in Mathematics Education
   —ERIC Clearinghouse for Science, Mathematics, and Environmental Education

3. **By 18 years of age, all students will be prepared for and able to afford college.**

   Access, Diversity, and Inclusion
   —ERIC Clearinghouse for Community Colleges

   The ERIC Review, Volume 5, Issue 3: The Path to College
   —ACCESS ERIC/ERIC Clearinghouse on Higher Education

4. **All states and schools will have challenging and clear standards of achievement and accountability for all children and will have effective strategies for reaching those standards.**

   Comprehensive School Reform for Rural Schools
   —ERIC Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools

   Developing and Implementing Local Education Standards
   —ERIC Clearinghouse on Assessment and Evaluation

   The Framework for the National Assessment of Educational Progress in Civics
   —ERIC Clearinghouse for Social Studies/Social Science Education

5. **There will be a talented, dedicated, and well-prepared teacher in every classroom.**

   The Education and Certification of History Teachers: Trends, Problems, and Recommendations
   —ERIC Clearinghouse for Social Studies/Social Science Education

   Of Course It Matters: Putting the National Commission Report Into Action (Written in response to the National Commission on Teaching & America's Future report *What Matters Most*)
   —ERIC Clearinghouse on Teaching and Teacher Education

   Teacher Morale
   —ERIC Clearinghouse on Educational Management

6. **Every classroom will be connected to the Internet by the year 2000, and all students will be technologically literate.**

   Getting Online: A Friendly Guide for Teachers, Students, and Parents
   —ACCESS ERIC

   "Integrating Technology on Campus: Human Sensibilities and Technical Possibilities" (Issue of the quarterly journal *New Directions for Community Colleges*)
   —ERIC Clearinghouse for Community Colleges

   Internet Resources for K–8 Students
   —ERIC Clearinghouse on Information & Technology

   K–12 Technology Planning at State, District, and Local Levels
   —ERIC Clearinghouse on Information & Technology

7. **Every school will be strong, safe, drug free, and disciplined.**

   Early Childhood Violence Prevention
   —ERIC Clearinghouse on Elementary and Early Childhood Education

   Improving School Violence Prevention Programs Through Meaningful Evaluation
   —ERIC Clearinghouse on Urban Education

   School Violence: Risk, Preventive Intervention, And Policy
   —ERIC Clearinghouse on Urban Education

   Violence and Aggression in Children and Youth
   —ERIC Clearinghouse on Disabilities and Gifted Education

ERIC on the Internet

ERIC strives to provide easy and affordable access to education resources for a diverse, global audience. The Internet has been an ideal vehicle for making ERIC's resources available to busy students, parents, and professionals. Anyone with an e-mail account can use it to communicate with ERIC Clearinghouses, order ERIC documents, or send a question to the AskERIC question-answering service. (See the ERIC System Directory on pages 26–28 for a list of e-mail addresses.)

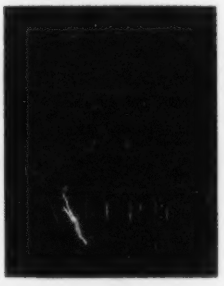
ERIC Web Sites. There are many ERIC Web sites, all linked by one systemwide site run by ACCESS ERIC at http://www.accesseric.org. More than 600 other Web sites now provide links to the main ERIC site, and Internet users now visit ERIC Web sites thousands of times every day to access resources that include:

- Thousands of lesson plans.
- A calendar of education-related conferences.
- Full-text materials from a variety of organizations for parents.
- A test locator database.
- Virtual libraries of full-text materials on topics such as school violence and school-to-work transition.

The high quality of ERIC Web sites is indicated by continually increasing usage and by the numerous awards the sites have received. Following are some examples of enhancements made to ERIC Web sites in 1998:

- The ERIC Clearinghouse on Elementary and Early Childhood Education has launched *Early Childhood Research & Practice* (http://ecrp.uiuc.edu), a peer-reviewed electronic journal that focuses on practice-related articles on the development, care, and education of children from birth to approximately age 8.
- The ERIC Clearinghouse on Higher Education added a section to its Web site (http://www.eriche.org) called Institutional Improvement Projects, which provides ideas from foundations, government organizations, and associations that can be used as models to improve postsecondary institutions.
- The ERIC Clearinghouse on Languages and Linguistics enhanced its Web site (http://www.cal.org/ericcll) by adding a new group of frequently asked questions on popular topics that include bilingual education, early foreign language learning, and opportunities for teaching English abroad. The site also added an Ask-the-Experts service to address questions on language education, linguistics, and cross-cultural education.
- ACCESS ERIC redesigned its systemwide Web site (http://www.accesseric.org). Users can now take advantage of the site's "Cross-Site Indexing" service, which will allow them to search all ERIC Web sites simultaneously.
- Participants in Lycos CyberSurfari '98, the Internet's largest treasure hunt, stopped at the ERIC Clearinghouse on Teaching and Teacher Education's Web site (http://www.ericsp.org) to track down an answer to one of the clues.
- The ERIC Clearinghouse on Educational Management updated its Web site (http://eric.uoregon.edu) to offer visitors access to information about resumes of in-process documents and journal articles. Users can search as many as 1,000 resumes of cutting-edge resources before these items appear in the ERIC database. This system is completely automated, and new resumes are added weekly.

AskERIC. The seven-year-old AskERIC service has become an indispensable part of the U.S. Department of Education and has grown in popularity with its users in the education community and beyond. Originally a special project of the ERIC Clearinghouse on Information & Technology (ERIC/IR), AskERIC is now an integral part of the ERIC system. This premier electronic question-answering service has seen its monthly average for questions received increase from 612 in 1993 to 3,675 in 1998. AskERIC information specialists answered the 100,000th question in 1997, and they responded to 44,460 questions in 1998.



Questions are e-mailed to AskERIC Central at askeric@askeric.org or submitted via the online form located on the AskERIC Web site at http://www.askeric.org. Currently about 64 percent of the questions are answered by subject specialists at the clearinghouses, and 36 percent are handled by AskERIC Central staff. Users can expect a reply within two business days. Responses may include a combination of the following components: ERIC database citations and search strategies, a list of Internet resources, subscription information for electronic mailing lists, print resources, contact information for organizations and associations, and information about other relevant resources.

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An AskERIC user survey conducted in 1998 showed that there are no "typical" AskERIC questions or users. A majority of requests are submitted by K–12 teachers, but requests also come from librarians, school administrators, college and university faculty, childcare workers, students at all levels, parents, government officials, and others. For more information on the results of the AskERIC user survey, see pages 23–24.

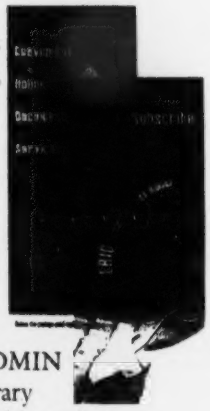
In addition to maintaining the AskERIC question-answering service, ERIC/IR offers an abundance of electronic resources at the AskERIC Virtual Library (http://www.askeric.org/Virtual). These resources include lesson plans, AskERIC InfoGuides, ERIC Digests, education listserv archives, and much more. The entire ERIC database (dating back to 1966) can also be searched online from this Web site. In the coming year, AskERIC will introduce the AskERIC Education Portal. This new Web site will allow users to customize the site and better find education information on the Internet.

A teacher contacted AskERIC to find out how her students could use computer spreadsheets to organize their research about colonial and revolutionary times. The response she received from AskERIC resulted in this thank-you e-mail:

"You made my day! I am new to the Internet and the 10 pages of information about computer spreadsheets for my fourth and fifth graders that you sent me pulled me out of computer misery! I look forward to contacting each source and deeply appreciate your help. I wish more teachers knew about ERIC. I will spread the good news! Thanks. The children will receive the gift."

Online ERIC Document Delivery and New Subscription Service. The ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS) Web site (http://edrs.com) allows Internet users to search the ERIC database from their desktops; order documents during the same session; and request online delivery of recent, copyright-cleared documents. Electronic page images of ERIC documents are available in Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF); EDRS also provides links to the Adobe Acrobat Reader from its Web site. Currently, three ERIC database search engines feature seamless ordering of electronic documents from EDRS.

Approximately 80 percent of the ERIC documents from 1993 to the present are available for online ordering and electronic delivery through the EDRS Web site. For another 15 percent, ERIC has permission to provide microfiche copies only, which can also be ordered online. About 5 percent of the documents are not available from EDRS; availability information is provided in the bibliographic record.



In response to the growing need that research institutions and their patrons have for immediate access to ERIC materials, EDRS has created E*Subscribe, a new electronic document subscription service. The new service features access to the ERIC database via two levels of searching, links to electronic document images for downloading in Adobe PDF format, and ordering capability for documents not available electronically. For more information, call EDRS at 1–800–443–3742 or visit its Web site at http://edrs.com.

Listservs. ERIC is proud to be a catalyst in fostering dialog and information exchange through the creation and administration of electronic discussion groups. Approximately 37,000 people participate in more than 80 ERIC-managed listservs, including ECENET-L (early childhood education), K12ADMIN (elementary and secondary school administration), and LM_NET (school library and media services). The ERICNews listserv provides subscribers with bimonthly updates

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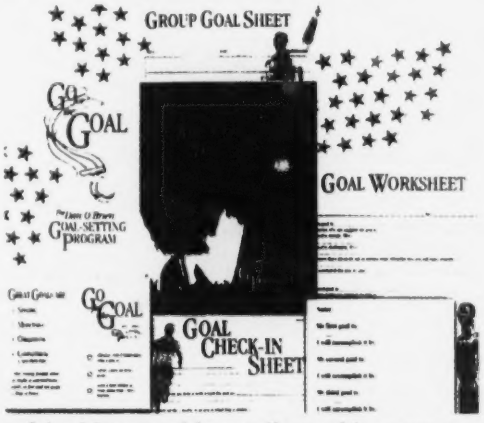
on new ERIC publications and services. A list of ERIC-sponsored listservs with links to subscription information is available on the ERIC systemwide Web site at http://www.accesseric.org/resources/listservs.html. Archives of many of these discussion groups are available at http://www.askeric.org/Virtual/Listserv_Archives.

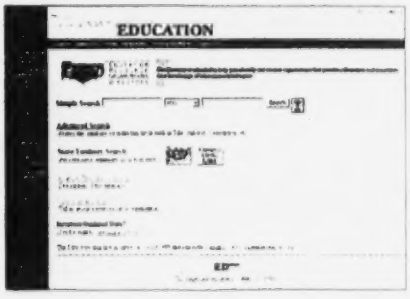
Special Projects

ERIC Clearinghouses and support components bring ingenuity and creativity to the ERIC system through a number of special projects. These projects are extensions of the core ERIC activities designed to improve access to a wide spectrum of education-related information. Funding for special projects may come from ERIC, the clearinghouses' host organizations, and/or other sponsors.

Dan O'Brien Goal-Setting Program. The ERIC Clearinghouse on Educational Management created this program in 1993 to introduce students to the process of setting goals and working to achieve them. The program is designed for students in grades 3 through 6 and features a 24-page teachers' curriculum guide titled *Go for the Goal* that contains five goal-setting lessons. Other program materials include brochures; handouts; work sheets; and goal cards, which students can use to record their goals and mark their progress. The role model for this program is Dan O'Brien, an athlete who holds the world record in the decathlon and won the gold medal in that event at the 1996 Olympics. He overcame many obstacles to become a successful athlete, and he attributes his success to the goal-setting strategies he learned in school. Students who take part in this program can write to Dan O'Brien in care of the ERIC Clearinghouse and will receive a letter, biography, and other materials at no charge. For more information about this program, contact the ERIC Clearinghouse on Educational Management at 1–800–438–8841 or visit the Web site at http://obrien.uoregon.edu.



Education Resource Organizations Directory. ACCESS ERIC assists the U.S. Department of Education by maintaining the database for the Education Resource Organizations Directory located on the Department's Web site (http://www.ed.gov/BASISDB/EROD/direct/SF). The Directory enables Internet users to search more than 2,400 national, regional, and state organizations, including information centers; comprehensive and technical assistance centers; and many other types of programs, services, and organizations. The ERIC Resource Collections and Education-Related Information Centers are searchable online as part of the Directory. In 1998, the search screens were simplified to a more user-friendly format, annual updating was begun for all records, and an electronic data verification form was created to allow organizations to update their records via e-mail.



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ERIC/OSEP Special Project. Through the ERIC Clearinghouse on Disabilities and Gifted Education, with funding from the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP), the Council for Exceptional Children operates the ERIC/OSEP Special Project. This special project hosts an annual conference for directors of OSEP-sponsored research projects; produces a directory of special education discretionary projects; and produces publications such as *Research Connections, Newsbriefs*, and *Topical Briefs*. Recent publications have included *Integrating Technology Into the Standard Curriculum, Inclusion and Preschoolers*, and *Moving Research Into Classroom Practice*, all of which can be found online at http://www.cec.sped.org/ericec/osep-sp.htm.

ERIC Search Wizard and Expert Searches. This state-of-the-art search engine (http://ericae.net/search.htm), developed by the ERIC Clearinghouse on Assessment and Evaluation, allows users to select terms from the *Thesaurus of ERIC Descriptors* to build effective, high-quality searches. The Wizard features seamless online ordering, readily available information on journal and document sources, multiple display options, an option to save citations to disk, and a "More Like This" option based on ERIC descriptors. The Wizard also allows users to load more than 80 prepackaged search strategies on current educational topics. The strategies were developed by expert reference librarians in the ERIC system. Users can adopt the strategies as a starting point or can revise them to suit their needs. The Wizard has recently been enhanced to allow users to refine their search strategies and to "explode" a search term to include all narrower terms.

Gateway to Educational Materials (GEM). The National Library of Education (NLE) is spearheading a consortium effort—GEM (http://www.geminfo.org)—which is a special project of the ERIC Clearinghouse on Information & Technology. The goal of GEM is to create an operational framework that will provide the key to "one-stop, any-stop" access to the thousands of lesson plans, curriculum units, and other educational materials on the Internet. To accomplish this, GEM created the K–12 meta-data standard for describing educational resources. GEM also provides software, training, and support so that GEM consortium members with Internet-based collections can easily use GEM to describe their resources. These descriptions are assembled in the Gateway Catalog (http://www.thegateway.org), which went online in February 1998, and currently includes more than 6,000 records from more than 90 organizations. The catalog contains links to the materials, which creates easy access regardless of where the materials reside on the Internet.

National Parent Information Network (NPIN). NPIN is a special project of the ERIC Clearinghouse on Elementary and Early Childhood Education and the ERIC Clearinghouse on Urban Education. Begun in 1993 as an Internet site for parents (http://npin.org), NPIN services have since expanded to provide information via e-mail with the AskERIC program, through workshops, and through its toll-free telephone number (1–800–583–4135).

NPIN staff conduct workshops on Internet uses for parents and children, produce monthly issues of *Parent News* (NPIN's award-winning online publication for parents), produce ERIC Digests, moderate the PARENTING-L listserv, work with a variety of national groups on projects to improve parenting education, and continue to enhance one of the largest Internet sites for parents. In 1998, the NPIN site was visited 651,016 times.

In 1998, NPIN received a great deal of media attention. Two articles about NPIN appeared in *The New York Times*, and interviews of NPIN staff were broadcast on *NBC*

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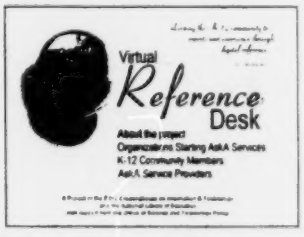
Nightly News, ABC's *Good Morning America,* Radio Free Europe, and the Voice of America and appeared in *Kids* magazine and *Sesame Street Parent* magazine. In addition, the Illinois State Library funded a new project called NPIN Illinois that connects parents in that state with local agencies and resources.

NIFL-ESL Listserv. Since March 1995, the Adjunct ERIC Clearinghouse for ESL Literacy Education has moderated the NIFL-ESL listserv (http://www.cal.org/ncle/nifl-esl.htm), 1 of 10 listservs hosted by the National Institute for Literacy as part of its LINCS project. With 700 subscribers as of January 1999, the NIFL-ESL listserv is a busy forum for discussion about teaching English to adult immigrants and about related educational policy issues.

Test Locator. Test Locator (http://ericae.net/testcol.htm) describes more than 11,000 assessment instruments and their availability. It is a joint project of the ERIC Clearinghouse on Assessment and Evaluation, the Library and Reference Services Division of the Educational Testing Service, the Buros Institute of Mental Measurements at the University of Nebraska in Lincoln, the Region III Comprehensive Center at George Washington University, and Pro-Ed test publishers.

Virtual Libraries. Several ERIC Clearinghouse Web sites offer virtual libraries of full-text documents in their topic areas. For example, the ERIC Clearinghouse on Elementary and Early Childhood Education hosts a virtual library on its ReadyWeb site (http://readyweb.crc.uiuc.edu), which offers more than 40 publications on school readiness and learning readiness. The ERIC Clearinghouse on Community Colleges' virtual library (http://www.gseis.ucla.edu/ERIC/libraryset.html) contains its quarterly information bulletins; one-page research summaries; ERIC Digests; and bibliographies on topics such as access, faculty, finance, and the future. In addition, the ERIC Clearinghouse on Counseling and Student Services has a collection of virtual libraries (http://www.uncg.edu/edu/ericcass/libhome.htm) on topics such as career development, school violence, and conflict resolution.

Virtual Reference Desk (VRD). VRD is building a national cooperative digital reference service (http://www.vrd.org). The project is sponsored by NLE and the ERIC Clearinghouse on Information & Technology (ERIC/IR), with support from the Office of Science and Technology Policy. Digital reference services, also called "Ask-An-Expert" (or "AskA") services, are Internet-based, question-answering services (such as "Ask Dr. Math" and "Ask an Astronaut") that connect users with experts in specific subjects or skills. The project, now in its third phase, consists of research and creation of resources in the area of digital reference; development of a technical infrastructure for VRD and tools for individual AskA services; development of relationships with project stakeholders from library, business, higher education, and government sectors and digital reference services; and consultation with organizations on building new digital reference services. Recent resource development includes ERIC/IR's publication of *AskA Starter Kit,* which is a manual for building and maintaining digital reference services, and the development of The VRD Learning Center (http://www.vrd.org/k12/k-12home.html), which provides guidance to the K–12 community on using AskA services in the classroom. Plans for 1999 include a VRD national digital reference conference at the Harvard Graduate School of Education library, including a training session cosponsored by NELINET (a New England library consortium); continued digital reference software development in collaboration with Remedy Corporation (a help desk vendor); testing of the national K–12 digital reference network; and consultation with the U.S. Department of Education on developing Department digital reference services..



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Workplace Literacy Products. The ERIC Clearinghouse on Adult, Career, and Vocational Education has developed a publication titled *Exemplary Products Produced by National Workplace Literacy Program Demonstration Projects, 1995–1998.* This publication, which was funded by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Vocational and Adult Education, highlights 58 workplace education products that were selected as exemplary by a panel of experts. These products can be used by adult educators, corporate and union training staff, and others seeking information for their work force education programs and can serve as examples to the profession of the application of principles of good practice in planning, conducting, and evaluating adult and workplace education programs. For more information, contact the ERIC Clearinghouse on Adult, Career, and Vocational Education at 1–800–848–4815, ext. 2–8625, or visit the Web site at http://ericacve.org.

Outreach and Training

The development of outreach activities, which are intended to attract new users to ERIC and to update experienced users on the latest ERIC products and services, has always been an important ERIC function. ERIC outreach efforts include exhibits and presentations at education-related conferences. In 1998, ERIC staff members participated in more than 470 education-related meetings, conferences, and workshops; gave more than 230 presentations; and staffed exhibits at more than 80 gatherings, including the International Reading Association, the National Association for the Education of Young Children, and the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education. ERIC components often use the "train-the-trainers" strategy by directing presentations to teacher educators, librarians, and others in a position to share ERIC information with groups.

Some examples of 1998 ERIC outreach activities are as follows:

- The ERIC Clearinghouse on Counseling and Student Services conducted the Assessment '98—Assessment for Change, Changes in Assessment conference, which was held in January in St. Petersburg, Florida. The conference built on the success of the Assessment '95 conference and was attended by more than 200 counselors, teachers, administrators, and testing professionals from all across the country.
- The ERIC Clearinghouse on Educational Management produced six ERIC Digests that were disseminated throughout Latin and South America by the Latin American Center for Development, Education, and Culture in Valparaiso, Chile. The center is translating the Digests into Spanish and distributing them to school systems, universities, and schools of education in Chile and other Spanish-speaking countries.
- Staff at the ERIC Clearinghouse on Disabilities and Gifted Education presented a session titled "Surfing the Internet for Gifted/Talented Resources" and disseminated ERIC materials to the National Association for Gifted Children.
- Erwin Flaxman, director of the ERIC Clearinghouse on Urban Education, was interviewed by an NBC broadcaster in Burbank, California, about the plan to remove student lockers from schools in Orange County as a strategy to reduce drug use and violence among students.
- Dave Lankes, director of the ERIC Clearinghouse on Information & Technology, gave presentations on the VRD special project at the Library of Congress Institute on Reference Services in a Digital Age and at the American Society for Information Science Annual Conference.

ACCESS ERIC is a support component that provides coordination and outreach for the entire ERIC system. In 1998, ACCESS ERIC:

- Sent an announcement about its Parent Brochure series to a mailing list of more than 11,000.
- Worked with staff at the U.S. Department of Education to have *The ERIC Review: The Path to College* promoted in an issue of the Department's *Community Update* newsletter (which has a mailing list of approximately 250,000).
- Distributed *The ERIC Review: K–12 Foreign Language Education* to more than 6,500 members of the American Council for Teachers of Foreign Languages.
- Gave presentations at several conferences and meetings, including the National Teachers Forum, the National Education Network Executive Committee meeting, and the Library of Congress/NLE Workshop for the SOROS Fellows.

Partnerships

ERIC has established more than 650 dynamic, mutually beneficial partnerships with institutions and organizations involved in collecting and disseminating information to the education community. ERIC Partners include, but are not limited to, associations, government agencies, federally funded programs, universities, research firms, private corporations, and libraries.

ERIC Partner organizations have agreed to promote ERIC, disseminate ERIC information through newsletters and journals, enhance the ERIC database through the addition of documents, and encourage joint projects such as workshops and conferences. In turn, these organizations enjoy special benefits from ERIC, such as VIP handling of their information requests, free or discounted ERIC publications, advance notice of materials distributed by the ERIC system, and technical assistance and support.

Major Partners include those organizations that provide funding for the Adjunct ERIC Clearinghouses. Sponsors are listed in the ERIC System Directory on pages 26–28. Adjunct ERIC Clearinghouses are associated with the ERIC Clearinghouse whose scope encompasses the narrower scope of the adjunct.

Two new adjuncts have recently joined the ERIC system. The Adjunct ERIC Clearinghouse on School Counseling Services is sponsored by the Department of Counseling, Development, and Higher Education, College of Education, at the University of North Texas. The other new adjunct is the Adjunct ERIC Clearinghouse for Postsecondary Education and the Internet, sponsored by the University of Virginia's Curry School of Education.

Other examples of successful partnerships are as follows:

- The ERIC Clearinghouse on Information & Technology maintains an excellent working partnership with the American Association of School Librarians (AASL) on the coordination of AASL's KidsConnect AskA service project. In 1998, the project involved 250 volunteer school librarians in 6 countries who responded to 7,427 questions from students in 52 countries.

- The ERIC Clearinghouse on Languages and Linguistics has several joint publication and distribution arrangements with organizations such as the National Clearinghouse on Bilingual Education and the Center for Research on Education, Diversity, and Excellence.
- The ERIC Clearinghouse on Urban Education served as a conference sponsor and conducted Internet resource demonstrations at the Safe Schools Coalition's conference on youth violence and substance abuse.
- The ERIC Clearinghouse on Disabilities and Gifted Education is partnering with the Javits Gifted and Talented Education Program Office to develop print resource guides to augment the video *Developing Outstanding Talents*.

By coordinating efforts with public and private Partners, ERIC is able to provide enhanced products and services at no additional cost to the government or taxpayers. Agencies or organizations that are interested in education and are willing to distribute ERIC information may become partners by contacting ACCESS ERIC or the ERIC Clearinghouse that most closely reflects their interests. See pages 26–28 for clearinghouse contact information or call 1-800-LET-ERIC (538-3742).

The question is not whether ERIC is useful or not, but rather how we could survive without it. I have utilized ERIC repeatedly, both in my work as a doctoral student and in my work as an administrator. The service is comprehensive, quick, and courteous. It is a magnificent tool, permitting an educator to instantly access the most current research on any topic. I view ERIC as the "crown jewel" of American public education.

—Norman S. Zamcheck, high school principal,
Norwalk, Connecticut

Thank you, thank you. You have given me so much help with my new student who has been in the USA only 11 days from Russia. What a great service you are to elementary school teachers.

—An AskERIC user

I have spent two happy days accessing the sources you generously provided me! I deeply appreciate the time and energy you spent on behalf of our school district and our middle school foreign language program. We will make good use of the documents you have shared with me, and the information gleaned from them will help us immensely in making our case for beginning language study in grade 7 (or earlier, if we can work toward that next!).

—Linda H. Trepanier,
Foreign Language Department Chairperson,
Portage Public Schools, Michigan

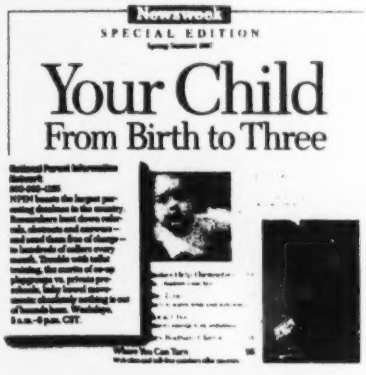
Results of ERIC Customer Surveys

Each year, ERIC receives hundreds of thank-you messages like the ones cited throughout this report that provide anecdotal evidence of ERIC's usefulness to a variety of education stakeholders. Historically, ERIC components have also used more formal approaches to gather information on who uses ERIC, how they use it, and their level of satisfaction with ERIC products and services.

The U.S. Department of Education, along with other federal agencies, is looking closely at accountability in its programs. As a result, there is now an increased emphasis on evaluating the impact of programs like ERIC. Effective January 1999, new five-year contracts require that each ERIC Clearinghouse regularly obtain feedback regarding customer satisfaction with its products, services, and how its work contributes to improving education. To fulfill this requirement, the clearinghouses will be conducting annual surveys using a customer satisfaction survey instrument that was approved by the Office of Management and Budget for use by all National Library of Education (NLE) programs.

The results of four surveys of ERIC customers that were conducted in 1998 are summarized below.

Meeting Parents' Information Needs: An Exploratory Study



In 1997, a special issue of *Newsweek* titled "Your Child From Birth to Three" featured the National Parent Information Network (NPIN), which is a special project of the ERIC Clearinghouse on Elementary and Early Childhood Education (ERIC/PS) and the ERIC Clearinghouse on Urban Education. In 1998, ERIC/PS received funding from the University of Illinois Research Board to conduct research on questions received from parents in response to the *Newsweek* article.

A content analysis was performed on 600 of the questions to determine the parents' information needs. Respondents indicated a need for information on some perennial issues related to parenting—what the indicators of normal development are, how to prevent sleep problems in young children, and how to locate good quality child care, for example—and some issues that were specific to the school setting, including children's adjustment to school, obtaining appropriate services for children with special needs, and how to build a constructive relationship with teachers and principals.

Findings related to the quality of ERIC/PS and NPIN services included:

- Parents are pleased with the service NPIN provides; 89 percent rated the materials received as useful.
- Parents found the materials written specifically for them to be the most useful.

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- More than 70 percent of respondents felt more comfortable in their role as parents as a result of the information received.
- More than 65 percent indicated that NPIN saved them "time and effort in obtaining information."

Respondents also indicated that they needed better explanations of ERIC database searches and recommended that the NPIN service should be publicized more.

As a result of this survey, ERIC/PS developed new information packets, articles for NPIN's online magazine *Parent News*, and ERIC Digests to meet the needs expressed by parents. The suggestion that NPIN needs more publicity led to a new print publication, *Parent News Offline*, which will include material from NPIN and will be produced twice a year and mailed to parenting centers.

Of the parents surveyed, 89 percent rated the materials they received from NPIN as useful.

ERIC Clearinghouse on Assessment and Evaluation: Study of ERIC Database Searches on the Internet

For two days in November 1998, people who used the ERIC Clearinghouse on Assessment and Evaluation's (ERIC/TM's) Wizard search engine for the ERIC database were prompted to complete a 10-item background questionnaire. The clearinghouse also captured data on the search strategy used, the number of queries per session, the amount of time spent searching ERIC, and the number of abstracts viewed.

Only 153 (4.5 percent) of the 3,420 searches analyzed met the minimum standard; therefore, the researchers concluded that users are conducting poor searches and are accepting one or two somewhat relevant hits rather than conducting thorough searches to locate the best citations.

An analysis was performed on the searches conducted by 3,420 users. As figure 1 shows, the primary purpose for these searches was for research report preparation, followed by class assignments and professional interest.

Figure 1: Users' Purposes for Searching the ERIC Database (ERIC/TM Wizard Search Engine)

Purpose	Number of Users	Percent
Research Report Preparation	1,825	53%
Class Assignment	601	18%
Professional Interest	554	16%
Lesson Planning	177	5%
Background for Policy Making	175	5%
Classroom Management	88	3%
TOTAL	3,420	100%

Most of the users reported themselves to be graduate students, followed by K–12 teachers and researchers. The distribution of user types is shown in figure 2.

Figure 2: Type of Users Searching the ERIC Database (ERIC/TM Wizard Search Engine)

User Type	Number of Users	Percent
Graduate Student	896	26%
K–12 Teacher	641	19%
Researcher	445	13%
Undergraduate Student	380	11%
College Professor	209	6%
K–12 Administrator	121	4%
College Librarian	96	3%
K–12 Staff	77	2%
Parent	72	2%
K–12 Librarian	71	2%
Other	412	12%
TOTAL	3,420	100%

For each searcher, the clearinghouse tracked (1) the number of "OR's" in the searches as a measure of search quality, (2) the number of queries per session, (3) whether the searcher used the *Thesaurus of ERIC Descriptors* or the free-text search engine, (4) the number of hits (records) examined, and (5) the amount of time devoted to searching per session.

Among the findings were the following:

- Across all user types, searches contained an average of only one "OR" in every two sessions. This finding indicates that users are usually relying on a single term to locate information on their topic.
- Less than half of the searches conducted involved the use of the thesaurus feature, although college librarians and college professors used the thesaurus much more often than most users. This means that users are guessing how a record was indexed or are assuming that one word or phrase is sufficient to capture all of the literature on a concept.
- The typical user performs two to three queries per search session—about half as many as clearinghouse reference staff would use to locate the best citations on the topic.
- Most users looked at the abstracts of only five or six of the records retrieved by their searches. The median amount of time spent on a search was about six minutes.

The researchers defined a minimum standard for a good search as one that included at least one "OR" in the query, included more than one query, and examined at least four of the records retrieved. Only 153 (4.5 percent) of the 3,420 searches analyzed met the minimum standard; therefore, the researchers concluded that users are conducting poor searches and are accepting one or two somewhat relevant hits rather than conducting thorough searches to locate the best citations.

As a result of this survey, ERIC is taking several steps to address the problem of poor searches. ERIC/TM has revised its Web-based search engine to make it more conducive to database exploration. Most importantly, several options were added to allow users to refine their search strategies, and an "explode" feature was added to allow users to search for a given term and all narrower terms. All ERIC database search engines offered by ERIC Clearinghouses currently include search tips or help features. In addition, the ERIC Clearinghouse on Higher Education recently introduced a new online tutorial for the ERIC database, and ACCESS ERIC is developing Web-based ERIC training that will include tips on getting the best searches from ERIC.

The above findings are from "Searching the ERIC database: Are you conducting good searches?" by Scott Hertzberg and Lawrence Rudner, 1999 (In review for journal publication; also online at http://ericae.net/~rudner/misc/user1.pdf) and from Rudner via personal communication to Lynn Smarte, ACCESS ERIC Project Director.

AskERIC: User Survey

During a three-week period in 1998, a survey was sent to every third user of the AskERIC electronic question-answering service, which is coordinated by the ERIC Clearinghouse on Information & Technology. A total of 639 surveys were sent out, and 196 users responded (31 percent). The survey asked about the user's profession, how often he or she used AskERIC, how the information was used, and about the value and quality of the service.

Ninety-three percent of AskERIC users said they would recommend the service to someone else.

Figure 3 shows the professions of AskERIC users who responded to the survey. The largest percentage was K–12 teachers, followed by students, administrators, faculty, and librarians. The "other" category includes such professions as school social worker, special education facilitator, and adult education advisor.

Figure 3: Professions of AskERIC Users

Profession	Percentage
K–12 Teacher	29%
Student	16%
Administrator	11%
Faculty	10%
Librarian	10%
Parent	5%
Pre-K Teacher/Caregiver	4%
Government Official	1%
Other	14%
TOTAL	100%

Figure 4 shows how the respondents used the information they received from AskERIC. Most used it for research, followed by classroom implementation and career preparation.

Figure 4: How Customers Used Information From AskERIC

Use	Percentage
Research	42%
Classroom Implementation	26%
Career Preparation	13%
Personal	11%
Other	8%
TOTAL	100%

Additional survey findings were as follows:

- AskERIC users are often repeat users. Half of the respondents said that they had used AskERIC more than once, with 32 percent having used it 4 to 10 times and 5 percent having used it more than 10 times.
- Ninety-two percent of the respondents reported that the information received was relevant to their question.
- Ninety-one percent reported that AskERIC had saved them time, and forty-eight percent reported that it had saved them money.
- ERIC database citations were rated as the most helpful components of AskERIC responses, and referrals to Internet sites were rated second.
- Respondents who followed up by obtaining full-text copies of the documents or articles cited in ERIC usually got them from a university library.
- AskERIC users often share the information they receive with others, including colleagues (33 percent), professors (21 percent), and students/classes (20 percent).
- Ninety-three percent of AskERIC users said they would recommend the service to someone else.

As a result of this survey, the AskERIC staff has redesigned the submission form for AskERIC questions. Because Internet resources were ranked as very useful in the survey, a distance-training module was developed for new AskERIC staff that focuses on searching the Internet effectively for education information. This module will teach the staff how to find even more relevant information, which they can then pass on to the users. AskERIC is developing a new user survey to be implemented in the fall of 1999 and in future years for comparative purposes.

The information on the AskERIC survey was provided by Pauline Lynch, AskERIC Coordinator. AskERIC is coordinated for the entire ERIC system by the ERIC Clearinghouse on Information & Technology.

National Clearinghouse for ESL Literacy Education: User Survey

In March 1998, the National Clearinghouse for ESL Literacy Education (NCLE), an Adjunct ERIC Clearinghouse, included a user survey in an issue of its newsletter *NCLEnotes*. Findings from the 110 respondents included the following:

A survey of readers of NCLEnotes, the newsletter of the Adjunct Clearinghouse for ESL Literacy Education, revealed that an average of 6 people read each copy of the newsletter, so a distribution of 6,500 copies actually reaches approximately 39,000 people.

- Each copy of *NCLEnotes* is read by an average of six people. This means that a distribution of 6,500 copies actually reaches approximately 39,000 people.
- Respondents had used information from the newsletter to:
  - Order NCLE publications (77 percent)
  - Contact NCLE for information (60 percent)
  - Visit NCLE's Web site (43 percent; 77 percent of those had bookmarked it)
  - Download publications from the Web site (40 percent)
- Seventy-three percent of the respondents had access to e-mail and 72 percent had Web access, compared with a fall 1993 survey in which only 12 percent of the respondents had Internet access.
- Readers of *NCLEnotes* identified themselves as:
  - Program administrators (39 percent)
  - Adult ESL instructors (28 percent)
  - Other education professionals, including family literacy specialists and researchers (19 percent)
  - College instructors (16 percent)
  - Library/resource specialists (8 percent)
  - Students (6 percent)
  - Other (6 percent)
  - Policymakers (3 percent)

  (Note: Totals more than 100 percent because respondents could choose more than one.)
- Eighty to ninety percent of the respondents said that they had used NCLE publications for their own professional development, and about 50 percent said that they used the information for a teacher resource center. (Respondents could check more than one use.)

As a result of this survey, NCLE staff wrote and published ERIC Digests on two topics requested by survey respondents: teaching reading and pronunciation skills.

The information on the NCLE user survey came from the *Adjunct ERIC Clearinghouse for ESL Literacy Education: Annual Report, 1998* and from Fran Keenan, Assistant Director/User Services at NCLE, via an e-mail to Lynn Smarte, ACCESS ERIC Project Director.

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ERIC System Directory

Federal Sponsor

The ERIC Program staff manage the ERIC system, coordinate systemwide activities, and establish ERIC system policies.

Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC)
National Library of Education
Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI)
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202–5721
Toll Free: (800) 424–1616
TTY/TDD: (800) 437–0833
E-mail: eric@inet.ed.gov
Web: http://www.ed.gov

Clearinghouses

Each of the 16 ERIC Clearinghouses specializes in a different subject area of education. The clearinghouses acquire significant literature within their particular scope; select the highest quality and most relevant materials; and catalog, index, and abstract these materials for input into the ERIC database. The clearinghouses also provide research summaries, bibliographies, information analysis papers, and many other products and services. Together, the 16 clearinghouses present the most comprehensive mosaic of education information in the country.

The two-letter acronyms following each clearinghouse's name reflect how they are referred to in the ERIC database. In many cases, the acronym is based on an old clearinghouse name—for example, Adult, Career, and Vocational Education used to be known simply as Career Education.

Adult, Career, and Vocational Education (CE)
Ohio State University
1900 Kenny Road
Columbus, OH 43210–1090
Toll Free: (800) 848–4815, ext. 2–8625
Phone: (614) 292–8723
TTY/TDD: (614) 688–8734
E-mail: ericacve@postbox.acs.ohio-state.edu
Web: http://ericacve.org

Assessment and Evaluation (TM)
University of Maryland, College Park
College of Library and Information Services
1129 Shriver Laboratory
College Park, MD 20742
Toll Free: (800) GO4–ERIC (464–3742)
Phone: (301) 405–7449
E-mail: ericae@ericae.net
Web: http://ericae.net

Community Colleges (JC)
University of California at Los Angeles
3051 Moore Hall
P.O. Box 951521
Los Angeles, CA 90095–1521
Toll Free: (800) 832–8256
Phone: (310) 825–3931
E-mail: ericcc@ucla.edu
Web: http://www.gseis.ucla.edu/ERIC/eric.html

Counseling and Student Services (CG)
University of North Carolina at Greensboro
School of Education
201 Ferguson Building
P.O. Box 26171
Greensboro, NC 27402–6171
Toll Free: (800) 414–9769
Phone: (336) 334–4114
E-mail: ericcass@uncg.edu
Web: http://www.uncg.edu/edu/ericcass

Disabilities and Gifted Education (EC)
Council for Exceptional Children
1920 Association Drive
Reston, VA 20191–1589
Toll Free: (800) 328–0272
Phone: (703) 264–9475
TTY/TDD: (800) 328–0272
E-mail: ericec@cec.sped.org
Web: http://ericec.org

Educational Management (EA)
5207 University of Oregon
1787 Agate Street
Eugene, OR 97403–5207
Toll Free: (800) 438–8841
Phone: (541) 346–1684
E-mail: ppiele@oregon.uoregon.edu
Web: http://eric.uoregon.edu

Elementary and Early Childhood Education (PS)
University of Illinois at Urbana–Champaign
Children's Research Center
51 Gerty Drive
Champaign, IL 61820–7469
Toll Free: (800) 583–4135
Phone: (217) 333–1386
TTY/TDD: (800) 583–4135
E-mail: ericeece@uiuc.edu
Web: http://ericeece.org
National Parent Information Network Web: http://npin.org

Higher Education (HE)
George Washington University
One Dupont Circle, NW, Suite 630
Washington, DC 20036–1183
Toll Free: (800) 773–ERIC (3742)
Phone: (202) 296–2597
E-mail: eriche@eric-he.edu
Web: http://www.eriche.org

Information & Technology (IR)
Syracuse University
4–194 Center for Science and Technology
Syracuse, NY 13244–4100
Toll Free: (800) 464–9107
Phone: (315) 443–3640
E-mail: eric@ericir.syr.edu
AskERIC E-mail: askeric@askeric.org
Web: http://ericir.syr.edu/ithome
AskERIC Web: http://www.askeric.org

Languages and Linguistics (FL)
Center for Applied Linguistics
4646 40th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20016–1859
Toll Free: (800) 276–9834
Phone: (202) 362–0700
E-mail: eric@cal.org
Web: http://www.cal.org/ericcll

Reading, English, and Communication (CS)
Indiana University
Smith Research Center
2805 East 10th Street, Suite 150
Bloomington, IN 47408–2698
Toll Free: (800) 759–4723
Phone: (812) 855–5847
E-mail: ericcs@indiana.edu
Web: http://www.indiana.edu/~eric_rec

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Rural Education and Small Schools (RC)
Appalachia Educational Laboratory
1031 Quarrier Street
P.O. Box 1348
Charleston, WV 25325–1348
Toll Free: (800) 624–9120
Phone: (304) 347–0400
TTY/TDD: (304) 347–0448
E-mail: ericrc@ael.org
Web: http://www.ael.org/eric

Science, Mathematics, and Environmental Education (SE)
Ohio State University
1929 Kenny Road
Columbus, OH 43210–1080
Toll Free: (800) 276–0462
Phone: (614) 292–6717
E-mail: ericse@osu.edu
Web: http://www.ericse.org

Social Studies/Social Science Education (SO)
Indiana University
Social Studies Development Center
2805 East 10th Street, Suite 120
Bloomington, IN 47408–2698
Toll Free: (800) 266–3815
Phone: (812) 855–3838
E-mail: ericso@indiana.edu
Web: http://www.indiana.edu/~ssdc/eric_chess.htm

Teaching and Teacher Education (SP)
American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education
1307 New York Avenue, NW, Suite 300
Washington, DC 20005–4701
Toll Free: (800) 822–9229
Phone: (202) 293–2450
E-mail: query@aacte.org
Web: http://www.ericsp.org

Urban Education (UD)
Teachers College, Columbia University
Institute for Urban and Minority Education
Main Hall, Room 303, Box 40
New York, NY 10027–6696
Toll Free: (800) 601–4868
Phone: (212) 678–3433
E-mail: eric-cue@columbia.edu
Web: http://eric-web.tc.columbia.edu

Adjunct Clearinghouses

Adjunct ERIC Clearinghouses are associated with the ERIC Clearinghouse whose scope encompasses the narrower scope of the adjunct. Adjuncts perform some or all of the following functions in their subject areas: identifying and acquiring significant literature within their scope area for the ERIC database, providing reference and referral services, providing technical assistance, maintaining or contributing to Web sites, and producing publications. They receive funding from sponsors outside the ERIC system.

Child Care
National Child Care Information Center
243 Church Street, NW, Second Floor
Vienna, VA 22180
Toll Free: (800) 616–2242
TTY/TDD: (800) 516–2242
E-mail: info@nccic.org
Web: http://nccic.org
Sponsored by: Child Care Bureau; Administration for Children, Youth, and Families; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Clinical Schools
American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education
1307 New York Avenue, NW, Suite 300
Washington, DC 20005–4701
Toll Free: (800) 822–9229
Phone: (202) 293–2450
E-mail: iabdal-haqq@aacte.org
Web: http://www.aacte.org/menu2.html
Sponsored by: Ford Foundation

Consumer Education
Eastern Michigan University
National Institute for Consumer Education
559 Gary Owen Building
Ypsilanti, MI 48197
Phone: (734) 487–2292
E-mail: nice@emich.edu
Web: http://www.nice.emich.edu
Sponsored by: National Institute for Consumer Education, Eastern Michigan University

Educational Opportunity
National TRIO Clearinghouse
Council for Opportunity in Education
1025 Vermont Avenue, NW, Suite 900
Washington, DC 20005
Phone: (202) 347–2218
E-mail: clearinghouse@hqcoe.org
Web: http://www.trioprograms.org
Sponsored by: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Higher Education Preparation and Support

Entrepreneurship Education
Center for Entrepreneurial Leadership
Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation
4801 Rockhill Road
Kansas City, MO 64110–2046
Toll Free: (888) 4–CELCEE (423–5233)
Phone: (310) 206–9549
E-mail: celcee@ucla.edu
Web: http://www.celcee.edu
Sponsored by: The Center for Entrepreneurial Leadership, Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation

ESL Literacy Education
Center for Applied Linguistics
4646 40th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20016–1859
Phone: (202) 362–0700, ext. 200
E-mail: ncle@cal.org
Web: http://www.cal.org/ncle
Sponsored by: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Vocational and Adult Education

International Civic Education
Indiana University
Social Studies Development Center
2805 East 10th Street, Suite 120
Bloomington, IN 47408–2698
Toll Free: (800) 266–3815
Phone: (812) 855–3838
E-mail: patrick@indiana.edu
Sponsored by: Center for Civic Education

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Law-Related Education
Indiana University
Social Studies Development Center
2805 East 10th Street, Suite 120
Bloomington, IN 47408–2698
Toll Free: (800) 266–3815
Phone: (812) 855–3838
E-mail: tvontz@indiana.edu
Web: http://www.indiana.edu/~ssdc/lre.html
Sponsored by: American Bar Association's National Law-Related Education Resource Center

Postsecondary Education and the Internet
University of Virginia
Curry School of Education
405 Emmet Street South
Charlottesville, VA 22903
Phone: (804) 924–3880
E-mail: jmilam@shentel.net
Web: http://highered.org
Sponsored by: University of Virginia's Curry School of Education

School Counseling Services
University of North Texas
College of Education
Department of Counseling, Development, and Higher Education
P.O. Box 311337
Denton, TX 76203–1337
Phone: (940) 565–2910
E-mail: Altkrs@unt.edu
Web: http://www.coe.unt.edu/cdhe/eric.htm
Sponsored by: Department of Counseling, Development, and Higher Education, College of Education, at the University of North Texas

Service Learning
University of Minnesota
R–460 VoTech Building
1954 Buford Avenue
St. Paul, MN 55108
Toll Free (800) 808–SERVe (7378)
Phone: (612) 625–6276
E-mail: serve@tc.umn.edu
Web: http://umn.edu/~serve
Sponsored by: National Service Learning Cooperative Clearinghouse, University of Minnesota

Test Collection
Educational Testing Service
Princeton, NJ 08541
Phone: (609) 734–5689
E-mail: library@ets.org
Web: http://ericae.net/testcol.htm
Sponsored by: Educational Testing Service

U.S.–Japan Studies
Indiana University
Social Studies Development Center
2805 East 10th Street, Suite 120
Bloomington, IN 47408–2698
Toll Free: (800) 266–3815
Phone: (812) 855–3838
E-mail: japan@indiana.edu
Web: http://www.indiana.edu/~japan
Sponsored by: Japan Foundation Center for Global Partnership

Affiliate Clearinghouse

This Affiliate ERIC Clearinghouse follows ERIC policies and procedures and performs many of the functions of the 16 ERIC Clearinghouses, focusing on four areas related to educational facilities: architecture, construction, engineering, and finance.

National Clearinghouse for Educational Facilities
National Institute of Building Sciences
1090 Vermont Avenue, NW, Suite 700
Washington, DC 20005–4905
Toll Free: (888) 552–0624
Phone: (202) 289–7800
E-mail: ncef@nibs.org
Web: http://www.edfacilities.org

Support Components

ERIC support components produce, publish, and disseminate system-wide ERIC products and services.

ACCESS ERIC
2277 Research Boulevard, 6L
Rockville, MD 20850
Toll Free: (800) LET–ERIC (538–3742)
Phone: (301) 519–5157
E-mail: accesseric@accesseric.org
Web: http://www.accesseric.org

ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS)
DynEDRS, Inc.
7420 Fullerton Road, Suite 110
Springfield, VA 22153–2852
Toll Free: (800) 443–ERIC (3742)
Phone: (703) 440–1400
E-mail: service@edrs.com
Web: http://edrs.com

ERIC Processing and Reference Facility
Computer Sciences Corporation
1100 West Street, Second Floor
Laurel, MD 20707–3598
Toll Free: (800) 799–ERIC (3742)
Phone: (301) 497–4080
E-mail: ericfac@inet.ed.gov
Web: http://ericfac.piccard.csc.com

Publishers

Oryx Press
P.O. Box 33889
Phoenix, AZ 85067–3889
Toll Free: (800) 279–ORYX (6799)
Phone: (602) 265–2651
Fax: (800) 279–4663;
(602) 265–6250
E-mail: info@oryxpress.com
Web: http://www.oryxpress.com

Oryx Press publishes the monthly and semiannual editions of *Current Index to Journals in Education (CIJE)* and the *Thesaurus of ERIC Descriptors.*

United States Government Printing Office (GPO)
Superintendent of Documents
P.O. Box 371954
Pittsburgh, PA 15250–7954
Phone: (202) 512–1800
Fax: (202) 512–2250
Web: http://www.access.gpo.gov

GPO publishes and sells subscriptions to *Resources in Education (RIE).*

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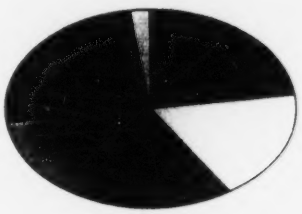
The ERIC Budget

The ERIC system was reauthorized in 1994 as part of the Educational Research, Development, Dissemination, and Improvement Act.

The ERIC budget for fiscal year 1999 is $10 million. These funds are allocated as follows:

- 78% to the 16 ERIC Clearinghouses
- 19% to the support components (ACCESS ERIC, the ERIC Processing and Reference Facility, and the ERIC Document Reproduction Service)
- 3% for printing ERIC publications by the Government Printing Office, toll-free FTS phone lines, computer systems, etc.

ERIC Clearinghouses use their funds for the following functions:



- Database Development — 23%
  acquiring, selecting, cataloging, abstracting, and indexing documents and articles for the ERIC database
- Clearinghouse Management — 18%
  covering day-to-day operating costs including salaries, supplies, and overhead
- System Improvements and Special Projects — 17%
  incorporating into the ERIC system advances in technology and major special projects such as AskERIC and NPIN
- Publications — 15%
  producing ERIC Digests, major publications, bibliographies, newsletters, and journal columns
- User Services — 15%
  responding to e-mail, phone calls, letters, and visitors' requests for information
- Outreach and Training — 10%
  giving workshops, exhibits, and presentations on ERIC
- Travel and Per Diem — 2%
  traveling to ERIC system meetings for directors and technical staff and outreach and training events

The ERIC budget is only a small part of the network of funding that ultimately makes ERIC accessible to millions of users. This network also includes:

- ERIC components' host organizations, which traditionally contribute in-kind resources amounting to approximately 12 percent of the total ERIC budget.
- Private companies and nonprofits that produce and sell the *ERIC Thesaurus*, *Current Index to Journals in Education (CIJE)*, ERIC documents on microfiche, and the ERIC database on CD-ROM. They provide funding for the Adjunct ERIC Clearinghouses and contribute high-tech equipment to support ERIC system enhancements.
- University and public libraries that purchase the ERIC indexes. They pay for access to the ERIC database on magnetic tape, on CD-ROM, and from online vendors. They also purchase the ERIC microfiche collections and pay for computers, microfiche cabinets, and staff to bring ERIC to their customers.

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What's Ahead for ERIC in the 21st Century?

What lies ahead for ERIC as a database, an information provider, a system? How will changes in user expectations, information services, technology, and available funding affect ERIC? These are not idle musings for futurists, but rather key questions with operational implications for today.

In recent months, ERIC personnel have been engaged in internal and external dialog to identify top issues and priorities. The ERIC Directors produced and disseminated a report, *Rising Expectations: A Framework for ERIC's Future in the National Library of Education*, which identifies four principles to guide ERIC's future:

- The need to obtain resources necessary to meet rising user expectations and support the vision of "an evolving electronic system that will deliver education information responsive to a wide audience."
- The importance of positioning ERIC as a major "load-bearing wall" as the National Library of Education is built.
- The need for ERIC to become a "national union catalog" of educational resources—the main venue for organizing, linking, describing, and making accessible all key education resources in all formats.
- The enhancement of ERIC's historic capacity to create useful and authoritative syntheses, analyses, and interpretations of education information.

Following internal discussion of this report, ERIC went public with it, inviting representatives of more than 3,500 libraries, professional organizations, and other institutional users of ERIC to read the report and respond by ranking a list of priorities. This subset of ERIC users gave the highest rankings to the following goals for ERIC:

- Expand the ERIC database to provide comprehensive coverage of education-related materials in a variety of formats (books, textbooks, software, Web sites).
- Work with others to increase access to the full text of journal articles summarized in the ERIC database.

These concerns were also expressed by ERIC Directors at a meeting in the spring of 1999, and the Directors have formed special task forces to pursue these goals.

In many respects, the ERIC system is already a distributed, innovative, and information-literate system. To meet information demands in the 21st century, we intend to move further and faster in these areas, and we are seeking the resources to do so. New five-year contracts to operate the ERIC Clearinghouses began in January 1999. The new, performance-based contracts encourage the hosts of the ERIC Clearinghouses to conduct their work in building the ERIC database speedily, efficiently, and to the highest degree of accuracy. Here are a few specific activities currently under way in the new contracts:

- ***Offering the option to customize Web sites.*** In the coming year, AskERIC will introduce the AskERIC Education Portal, which will provide users with the ability to

customize the site and better find education information on the Internet. In addition, the ERIC Clearinghouse on Elementary and Early Childhood Education and the ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading, English, and Communication will introduce Reading Pathfinder, a customer-driven site that will organize information on early childhood development and education, emergent literacy, and K–3 reading instruction based on questions asked by parents, teachers, and reading experts.

- ***Expanding and enhancing digital reference services.*** The ERIC Clearinghouse on Information & Technology's plans for its Virtual Reference Desk project include a national digital reference conference at the Harvard Graduate School of Education's library in 1999, as well as testing of the national K–12 digital reference network.
- ***Producing searchable CD-ROMs.*** Both the ERIC Clearinghouse on Educational Management and the ERIC Clearinghouse on Adult, Career, and Vocational Education will be producing searchable CD-ROM products featuring the full text of their subject-area publications.
- ***Supporting online conversations with authors.*** The ERIC Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools will offer opportunities for its Web site users to interact online with authors of new books and ERIC Digests.

ERIC users have also emphasized the need for ERIC to process information faster and make it available sooner. The contract for the ERIC Processing and Reference Facility, which is under competition at this writing, emphasizes online editing and a Facility-sponsored Web site as mechanisms to speed the processing time of ERIC resources and enhance customer service. Responses to ERIC customer surveys also reveal the need for more user training, especially to help people get the best search results from the ERIC database and understand how to use the results. To address this, ERIC is adding more "smart" features to its database search engines and is expanding online search tutorials.

Our commitment to building for the future based on customer input is strong. In order to gather additional feedback, each of the newly awarded clearinghouse contracts requires that users be surveyed annually regarding their satisfaction with and use of various products and services. ERIC is also preparing for a major systemwide evaluation (its first since 1981) to meet the requirements of the Government Performance and Results Act, determine customer needs, benchmark ERIC against similar systems, and position ERIC for the 21st century.

If you have ideas for improving ERIC's performance and customer responsiveness, feel free to contact:

Keith Stubbs
Director of ERIC
Phone: (202) 401–6014
Fax: (202) 205–7759
E-mail: keith_stubbs@ed.gov

Dianne Rothenberg
Associate Director, ERIC Clearinghouse on Elementary and Early Childhood Education
Chair, Executive Committee of ERIC Directors
Toll Free: (800) 583–4135
Fax: (217) 333–3767
E-mail: rothenbe@uiuc.edu

I've been using ERIC since it was first available out here at SDSU on microfiche. I have enjoyed the ease of access since having a PC here at home. Have used resources for research, advocacy, passing along to colleagues, keeping up with the field. ERIC remains an invaluable service.

—Jay Conrad Price,
Early Childhood Education Consultant,
San Diego State University

I just completed my Master of Arts in Education with an emphasis on school-age care. . . . This entire program was done via distance education online. Being able to access the ERIC database from my computer enabled me to work at all hours and to access information it would have taken me many trips to the library to find. I am grateful that ERIC is available for me!

—Elaine Piper,
family child care provider,
Nashville, Tennessee

This week, my seventh-grade English classes are studying advertising techniques with the objectives of learning better reasoning skills, better observation skills, and to understand how a writer focuses on a particular audience. This has given me some excellent information to pass on to them.

—A teacher who had used the Gateway to Educational Materials (GEM) Web site

I was able to reach out for assistance in getting resources, especially for Spanish-speaking parents, and through the magic of cyberspace, my request was answered by ERIC. The response came via a real person, not an automated answer. ERIC has always been a wonderful resource that I have used at the library; however, now that I am able to access it via the Internet, it is a marvelous resource.

—Rosemarie Mollinedo,
clinical director for a family support agency,
and community college instructor,
Los Angeles, California

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA